



Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office

Korean War Personnel Accounting History

As of May 3, 2007

Chronological History

- **1951-1955:** American graves registration teams searched South Korean battlefields for the remains of U.S. personnel lost during the war. North Korea returned several thousand remains in Operation GLORY in 1954. A total of 867 remains were declared unknown. Of these:
 - 867 were interred at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (Punch Bowl).
 - One was later transferred to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery.
- **1990:** North Korea unilaterally recovered and repatriated five remains through the United Nations Command (UNC).
- **1991:** North Korea unilaterally recovered and repatriated 11 remains through the UNC.
- **1992:** North Korea unilaterally recovered and repatriated 30 remains through the UNC.
- **1993-1994:** Following the signing of a UNC/Korea Peoples Army remains repatriation agreement, North Korea returned 162 remains; 148 in 1993, and 14 in 1994.
- **1994:** Kim Il Sung accepted former President Carter's proposal to conduct JFAs in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) to search for U.S. remains. Political differences postponed immediate implementation.
- **1996:**
 - The U.S. and DPRK met in New York City to discuss conducting JFAs in North Korea.
 - The two sides agreed to schedule two JFAs. One JFA was completed in July, which resulted in recovering one set of remains. A second JFA was cancelled due to tensions generated by a North Korean submarine infiltration of South Korean waters.
- **1997:**
 - May: Talks in New York focused on restarting joint remains recovery operations, initiating archival reviews, and establishing contact with American defectors in North Korea.
 - Three JFAs were scheduled and completed, resulting in the recovery of six remains.
 - December: During meetings in New York both sides agreed to conduct five JFAs and one joint archival review during 1998.
- **1998:**
 - Five JFAs were scheduled and completed, resulting in the recovery of 22 remains.
 - December: Both sides agreed in New York to increase the number of JFAs to six in 1999, and the number of archival reviews to two.

- **1999:**

- Six JFAs were scheduled. Three JFAs were completed, resulting in the recovery of 13 remains.
- June: North Korea refused to repatriate four remains recovered during the second JFA through Panmunjom, the accepted procedure at that time. As a result of this action, DPMO canceled the next three JFAs.
- October: The U.S. and DPRK met in New York to discuss new repatriation procedures. As a result, on October 25 the DASD for POW/Missing Personnel Affairs led a delegation to Pyongyang to oversee the repatriation from Pyongyang directly to Japan of the four remains from the second JFA of 1999 and observe the start of the final JFA of the year.
- December: During meetings in Berlin, the DPRK explicitly linked future JFAs in North Korea to the U.S. Government's willingness to provide a large-scale assistance package. The U.S. rejected such linkage, and the talks ended without agreement.

- **2000:**

- Five JFAs were scheduled and completed, resulting in the recovery of 65 remains.
- June: North Korea participated in negotiations in Malaysia without preconditions.
- Secretary of State Albright met with DPRK Vice Minister, Marshal Jo Myong Nok when he visited the U.S. She also met DPRK Chairman Kim Jong Il on her visit to Pyongyang later in October. During both meetings Secretary Albright emphasized the importance of achieving the fullest possible accounting for all missing American servicemen from the Korean War. She pointed out that our cooperation was a bright spot in U.S. – DPRK bilateral relations.
- December: Both sides met again in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, to discuss operations in 2001, and agreed to conduct five JFAs at two separate locations in North Korea.

- **2001:**

- Five JFAs were scheduled and completed, resulting in the recovery of 44 remains.
- May – August: One U.S. team operated in the Kujang area. A second team operated in the Kae'chon City area, known as "The Gauntlet" during the Korean War.
- September – November: The second team moved to the Changjin (Chosin) Reservoir.

- **2002:**

- Three JFAs were scheduled and completed, resulting in the recovery of 26 remains.
- January 23 - 26: The U.S. and DPRK met in Bangkok to discuss operations for 2002. The talks stalled over compensation issues.
- June: Talks resumed in Bangkok. The DPRK agreed to allow:
 - Three JFAs with teams working concurrently in Unsan and Changjin (Chosin) counties.
 - A U.S. team to survey sites on the western shore of the Chosin Reservoir during the final JFA in preparation for future joint operations.

- September: DPMO sponsored a visit to North Korea by representatives of U.S. veterans and family groups to show them the extent of recovery operations and demonstrate to the North Koreans the importance of the JFAs to the U.S. Government and the American public.
- October 6: The DASD for POW/Missing Personnel Affairs met with his North Korean counterpart, Representative of the Korean People's Army Liaison Mission to Panmunjom, in Bangkok, Thailand, to discuss operational issues for future JFA talks. The meeting resulted in an agreement-in-principle to continue dialogue on remains recovery issues.
- **2003:**
 - Two JFAs were scheduled and completed, resulting in the recovery of eight remains.
 - January – June: The DPRK did not respond to DPMO's proposal for 2003 JFA talks.
 - July: U.S. – DPRK talks resumed in Bangkok. Both sides agreed to conduct JFAs in North Korea from August through October.
 - The DPRK agreed to two JFAs in 2003 with teams working concurrently in Unsan and Changjin (Chosin) counties.
 - The U.S. and DPRK agreed to enhance safety measures during 2003 operations and meet again in Bangkok in November.
 - November: The U.S. and DPRK met in Bangkok to discuss JFAs for 2004, agreeing to:
 - Two periods of investigative and joint advance work to prepare for JFAs, and
 - Five JFAs in two locations: Unsan County and Changjin County (Chosin-east side).
- **2004:**
 - Five JFAs were scheduled and completed, resulting in the recovery of 39 remains.
 - February: U.S. and DPRK officials met in Bangkok to discuss two unresolved issues from the November 2003 talks: establishing a DPRK point of contact to help resolve credible live sighting reports; and overland logistics resupply and repatriation options. Both sides agreed:
 - To transport all supplies and equipment over-ground to support 2004 JFAs;
 - To transport all JFA teams, equipment, and remains recovered during each JFA across the DMZ at the end of each operation; and
 - That the DPRK delegation would present to their senior leaders a proposal to establish a single point of contact to resolve reports of Americans living in North Korea.
 - April: Teams deployed to construct base camps at Unsan and Chosin Reservoir sites.
 - November: U.S. and DPRK met in Bangkok to discuss 2005 JFAs, agreeing to the following:
 - One period of joint advance work in April to prepare for JFAs;

- Five JFAs to take place at Unsan County and Changjin County, the operation in Changjin County to include operations on both the east side and west side of the Chosin Reservoir.
- A period of joint investigative work to be conducted during JFA 39 (third JFA of 2005).
- **2005:**
 - April – May: JPAC completed the first of five scheduled JFAs in the DPRK, resulting in the recovery of five possible U.S. remains.
 - May 25: The U. S. announced a temporary suspension of JFAs in North Korea. The second through fourth JFAs scheduled for 2005 were not conducted.
 - September: JPAC deployed a 10-person team to the Republic of Korea (ROK) to investigate and excavate possible burial sites of American servicemen.
 - The team excavated four sites where American service members were purportedly buried during the war. Three sites yielded possible human remains: Kyonggi Province within eyesight of the Demilitarized Zone; Hill 209, and the Inchon area. The last site requires further excavation during the next operation in South Korea.
 - Another team followed up leads relating to at least 24 cases throughout the ROK.
 - JPAC met with ROK officials in December to discuss 2006 operations in South Korea.
- **2006:**
 - No JFAs were scheduled in North Korea during 2006 because JFAs were temporarily suspended by the USG in May 2005 and the suspension remains in effect.
 - May 13 - June 11: JPAC deployed a team to South Korea to research cases related to 44 unaccounted-for service members from the Korean War. The team investigated 15 cases relating to nine ground and six aircraft losses in the hopes of pinpointing sites for future recovery missions. One case may involve more than one individual. Seven of these cases involved battles that occurred near the Naktong River, which formed part of the boundary known as the Pusan perimeter. The team also searched for three burial site locations based on information provided by U.S. veterans of the war. Team members visited area villages and interviewed 80 potential witnesses.
 - August 1- September 15: JPAC deployed one investigative team and one recovery team to South Korea to conduct a joint field activity searching for Americans missing from the Korean War. Unfortunately, the team did not recover any probable U.S. remains.
- **2007:**
 - To date, no U.S.-North Korea talks for JFAs in 2007 have occurred, and therefore, no JFAs are scheduled in North Korea during 2007. The USG temporarily suspended JFAs in May 2005.
 - The Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) plans to conduct three JFAs in South Korea in 2007.

- The first JFA has been completed. The operation took place from March 15 to April 16. Nine JPAC personnel organized into two investigative teams investigated multiple sites to find evidence that could assist in the future recovery of missing Americans.
 - The teams investigated 23 aircraft losses and one ground loss.
 - One team investigated 13 sites in the northern part of South Korea and Seoul, while the other team investigated 11 sites in the southern part of the country.
- Second JFA: On April 20, JPAC deployed a recovery team of 11 personnel to conduct the second JFA in South Korea. The team will investigate three ground loss locations in South Korea and will conduct recovery operations as required. The second JFA is scheduled to end on May 20.
- Third JFA: The third JFA is scheduled to take place in South Korea in June.
- On April 11, the DPRK returned six caskets (number of remains TBD) to the United Nations Command Korea during the bipartisan U.S. delegation visit of Governor Bill Richardson and Former Secretary Anthony Principi to North Korea. On April 12, Repatriation Ceremonies were conducted at Yongsan Garrison, Seoul and subsequently at Hickam AFB, Hawaii to honor the returned remains. The remains are now located at JPAC's CIL undergoing the identification process.

Associated Developments with China:

- May – June 2004: JPAC excavated a Korean War F-86 crash site in Dandong, China along the Yalu River, recovering aircraft wreckage and remains. JPAC's Central Identification Laboratory later identified the remains of U.S. Air Force Captain Troy Cope, shot down during aerial combat over MiG alley on September 16, 1952. The family buried Captain Cope in Texas with full military honors on May 31, 2005.
- September 2006: A joint DPMO/JPAC team met with Chinese MND, PLA, and MFA officials to discuss efforts to access to China's military archives. The MND proposed working with our archivists to develop a program that will result in locating materials related to unaccounted-for Americans. The team also surveyed a promising site of a Korean War loss along the Chinese border.
- January 2007: DPMO and JPAC met with Chinese MND and MFA officials in Beijing to discuss personnel accounting initiatives for 2007. The MND reiterated its commitment to assist the U.S. in the accounting mission and reported it is searching for, locating, and organizing POW/MIA related information in its archives. JPAC presented 15 cases to the Chinese for recovery, investigation, and research.
- March 2007: China's MFA approved one case for an investigation and recovery operation from August through September 2007. This case involves three aircrew members lost during the Korean War. The MFA stated the other cases presented in January 2007 remain under consideration. The MND also committed to sending a delegation of archivists to Washington, DC and Hawaii in mid-May 2007 to meet with DPMO and JPAC personnel.

Major Remains Concentrations in North Korea

Estimated numbers of remains are in parenthesis

POW Camp Burial Sites (1,200)

Apex (270)

Camp 5 (322)

Death Valley Camp (233)

Unsan/Chongchon Area (1,559)

Unsan (275)

Kuryong (176)

Kujang (270)

Kunuri (403)

Pyongyang Cemetery (185)



Valley #1 Camp (41)

Chosin Reservoir Area (1,079)

Yudamni (199)

Sinhung (92)

Twiggae (244)

Kotori Cemetery (30)

Hungnam Cemetery (49)

Suan Camps (220)

DM Z (89)